

Suggestions for Greening your Regatta

Both our marine and fresh water recreational environments are coming under increased stress from poorly managed waste disposal, erosion, agricultural runoff, and pollution from both commercial and recreational use. This is on top of increased concerns regarding the affects on our water resources due to climate warming and associated erosional damage to both marine and fresh water shorelines and infrastructure.

Sailors have an intrinsic affinity to the waters in which they sail, and yet they are not always the best examples of environmental guardians. For many sailing clubs waste recycling is considered too expensive, and not enough care is given to the disposal of fuel and oil waste as well as toxic waste developed through the application of anti-fouling paint and various forms of hull restoration. Also to be considered are energy efficiencies for both club infrastructure and use of harbour electrical outlets and lighting. Club restaurants and bars try to avoid any additional costs through avoiding the use of one-use plastics in order to protect their commonly small profit margins.

While all the above involves developing a consistent sustainability policy over a reasonable period of time more rapid advances towards a green policy can be initiated through developing **green regatta guidelines**. The influx of a large numbers of sailors, companions, and volunteers over short period of time can dramatically add to additional generation of non-recyclable waste, pollution and energy use. With minimal additional cost much of this additional environmental stress can be avoided. When your club sees the results they may well make these guidelines the basis for a longer term Green Plan.

Communication:

- Stress your green regatta guidelines in communication with the participants. This will bring sustainability to the forefront to ensure they are aware of where to find water coolers, green bins etc. It is also an opportunity for them to take these guidelines back to their own sailing clubs for use in future regattas.
- Have one individual responsible for setting up the green regatta infrastructure to avoid overlap or communication gaps with club management and participants.
- Try to have the guidelines embedded in your sailing club's regatta webpage!
- If your club has a blog it is an good opportunity to not only spread the "gospel" but also have other club make suggestions for improvements to the guidelines.
- If applying green guidelines for the regatta adds to the cost, then explain to the participants why the additional costs are being applied. Most would readily agree to a minimal added cost for this cause. Or find a sponsor that is dedicated to waterway protection and ask them to cover the additional costs.

Waste management

The reduction of disposable waste can be reduced through both the minimal use of plastics and an effort to find short term recycle alternatives if they are not already in use by the club. This includes:

- Avoid using paper as mail outs or instructions during the regatta. All communication should be electronic.

- **Replace one use plastics with existing alternatives.**
 - Food wrap can be avoided through the use of reusable waxed cloth, wax paper, or just paper for food protection, including sandwiches for bag lunches.
 - Menus should be planned to avoid the use of plastic utensils or replace them with disposable wooden utensils. The other alternative is to have a wash basin of soapy water next to the garbage disposal in the eating area so that plastic utensils can be washed and reused. We did this quite successfully at Mobility Cup 2019 with minimal extra work.
 - Use non-plastic cups and plates at the various events where there is a bar set up. If your bar wants to use plastic, then buy cups specifically for the regatta! There are now biodegradable plastics available for an extra cost if necessary. If they are not available locally order on line from Amazon etc!
 - Either require participants to bring their own water bottles that can be filled at meeting areas or on the docks or supply them as part of the registration kit. Sponsors like to supply these with their names on both the water coolers and bottles!
- **Recycle bins:**
 - If your club does not use recycle bins, then ask your volunteers to bring organic and non-organic recycle bins from their residence for the duration of the regatta so they can add the recycle to their residential recycle disposal. Separate organic waste into suitable paper recycle bags for the appropriate green bins.
- **Coach and safety boats:**
 - Always insist that coach and safety boats use one specified refueling station rather than refilling from gas cans to minimize spillage.
 - Ensure that motorized boats do not idle unnecessarily, although this is difficult during racing, but manageable around the docks.